

Idaho Wolf Management Weekly Progress Report

To: Idaho Fish and Game Staff and Cooperators

From: IDFG Wolf Program Coordinator, Steve Nadeau

Subject: Status of Gray Wolf Management, Week of March 30-April 12, 2008

Wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains (NRM) were delisted on March 28, 2008. The USFWS successfully recovered and delisted the population with the help of state, federal, tribal and non government partners. Management of these wolves now resides with the states of Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming. The 2002 legislatively approved Wolf Conservation and Management Plan along with the March 2008 Idaho Fish and Game Wolf Population Management Plan, as well as the laws and policies of the state now govern wolf management in Idaho. Wolves are now listed as a big game animal in Idaho and protected under the laws and policies of the State of Idaho.

Once wolves were delisted, the USFWS decided to discontinue the publication of the NRM wolf weekly. Instead, for the time being, Idaho will continue publishing the Idaho specific wolf weekly. Along with the USFWS, contributors to the weekly historically have included the USDA APHIS Wildlife Services, the Nez Perce Tribe, and the states of Idaho and Montana. Wyoming was reported on by the USFWS. You may review past wolf weekly publications on our wolf webpage and links along with all pertinent and updated wolf information and publications at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

Monitoring

Deep and lingering snows are keeping wolves in lower elevations mostly along winter range later than usual this year, providing more opportunity for wolves to be in close proximity to cattle calving operations around private ground.

Two wolves (B216, B362) died of natural causes, both from interpack strife over the last couple weeks.

Control

On 3/30, WS investigated a report that wolves had killed a calf on private land near Leadore. While there was not enough evidence left to confirm the depredation, there was enough to determine that it was "probable" that wolves killed that calf. On 4/8, WS confirmed that wolves killed a calf on a neighboring private ranch. SW-64, a radio-collared wolf that moves back and forth from Montana was in the area during both investigations. Control efforts to halt the depredations are ongoing.

WS confirmed 2 wolf depredations on cattle on the same private ranch near Lemhi. The first depredation was confirmed on 3/31 and the second on 4/1. On 4/4, WS removed three sub-adult males from a f/w aircraft. Control efforts are concluded unless another depredation is confirmed.

On 4/2, WS confirmed that a single wolf killed a calf on private land near Medicine Lodge. WS was able to follow a single set of wolf tracks from the depredation site and shot and killed the

adult, black, male wolf that committed the depredation. Control efforts are concluded unless another depredation is confirmed.

On 4/2, a WS f/w aircrew was able to shoot and kill a large, gray wolf near the Ellis depredation site where a calf was confirmed to have been killed by a wolf the week before. Control efforts are concluded unless another depredation is confirmed.

On 4/3, WS confirmed that a wolf from the High Prairie pack killed a calf on private land north of Mountain Home. On 4/10, WS confirmed that the High Prairie wolves killed another calf on a neighboring private ranch. Control efforts to halt the depredations are ongoing.

On 4/3, WS confirmed that a single wolf killed a heifer on a private ranch near Leadore. Control efforts to remove the offending animal are ongoing.

On 4/5, WS captured, radio-collared and released a sub-adult, gray female wolf from the Double Springs pack at a private ranch in the Pahsimeroi. These wolves have been seen in the cattle several times this year.

On 4/6, WS investigated a report that wolves killed a newborn calf on private land near Clearwater. WS determined that the calf's death was not predator related.

On 4/9, a WS employee was performing non-wolf related duties at a private ranch near Cambridge when he spotted a pair of wolves in a group of cattle. The WS employee shot one of the wolves, an adult, gray female. While investigating, he found a freshly killed calf carcass that he confirmed as a wolf depredation. Control efforts are concluded unless another depredation is confirmed.

Wolves injured 2 dogs in the Ashton area that were later euthanized. Officers responded and investigated. We take this opportunity to offer our sympathy for the owners who lost valued pets. We also would like to remind people that when wolves are in the area, please be aware that they may attack or injure dogs. It often helps to keep dogs in kennels or inside buildings at night and to not let them roam freely when humans are not around. When fresh wolf sign is found, place dogs on restraints and keep supervised. The state law allows individuals to harass or kill a wolf attacking or molesting their domestic animals including pets. If you are having concerns or problems with wolves close to your residence, please inform the Fish and Game Office nearest you.

Management

Fish and Game wolf managers and specialists met on April 1 to review statewide wolf population management, wolf harvest rules and allocations. The following schedule is designed for wolf rule setting.

April 1	Statewide coordination meeting of management plan team
April 14	Regional recommendations (biological & nonbiological) due to bureau (standardized format will be provided)
April 21	Statewide recommendations sent to regions and available on website for public review
April 21 – May 16	Public review and input
May 16	Summaries of regional public input, and final regional recommendations due to bureau
May 21-23	Commission meeting, Twin Falls
June 18	Brochure ready for final review
July	Brochure distributed

Idaho Fish and Game conservation officers are investigating the shooting of two wolves on April 1 by a private landowner west of Ashton. He contacted the local conservation officer shortly after the incident, which still is under investigation.

Information and Education

Curt Mack and Jim Holyan attended the North American Wolf Conference at Chico Hotsprings Resort near Pray, MT from 4/8-10/08. They were among the co-authors, also including IDFG and Montana FWP, on a presentation given by Dave Ausband (Univ. of MT Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit) entitled "Tracking Wolves Post Delisting. Mack and Ausband sought additional funding for this research through contacts with organizations/individuals also in attendance at the conference.

On 4/9, ID WS Wolf Specialist Rick Williamson received the "Alpha Award" at the 20th Annual North American Wolf Conference at Chico Hot Springs, MT for his continuous hard work to enable wolves and people to coexist. The conference was sponsored by the Defenders of Wildlife, the Wolf Recovery Foundation and the National Park Service. Although IDFG was not in attendance at the conference, we would like to extend our sincere thanks to Rick for an excellent and professional job of wolf management over the years. Thanks Rick!